

STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 277

35p

A detailed illustration of Wolverine, the character from the X-Men franchise, in a crouching, ready-to-pounce pose. He is shown from the waist up, with his iconic adamantium claws extended from his hands. He has a fierce, determined expression with his eyes fixed forward. The background is a dark, industrial setting with vertical structural elements, possibly a factory or a mine, with some light filtering through in the distance. The overall color palette is dominated by browns, greys, and a hint of blue from his mask.

alpha



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**DON'T
MISS**

**THIS MONTH'S OTHER
ACTION-PACKED
ADVENTURE**

STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 276

35p



OUTGUARD

NOW ON SALE

ALPHA

NUEVO FRANCISCO WAS
REBUILT AFTER THE SECOND
GREAT EARTHQUAKE OF
2011. IT IS NOW 2090 AND
THE POPULATION BASK IN
THE SEARING MIDDAY
SUN ...

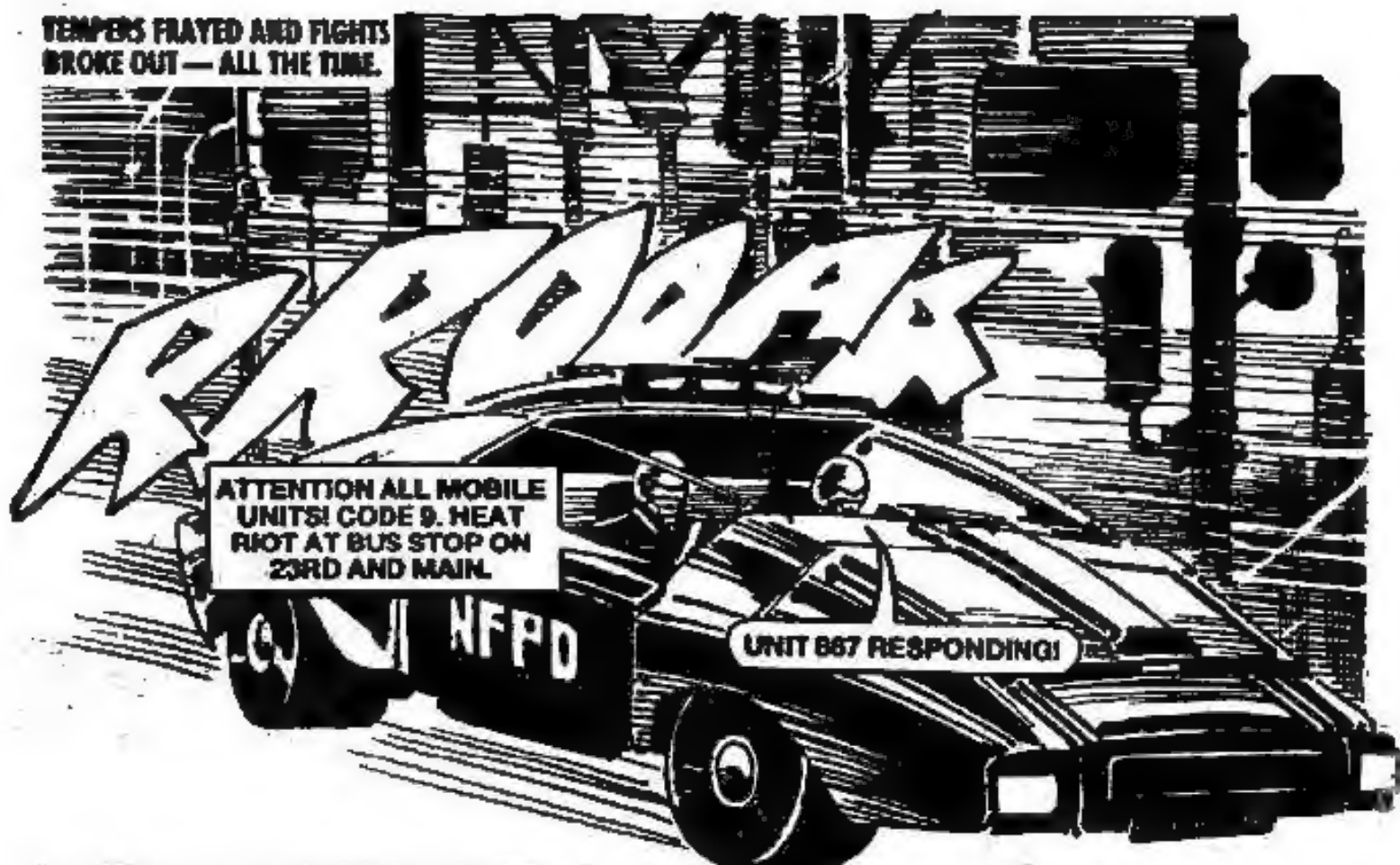
I CAN'T TAKE ANY
MORE OF THIS HEAT!

DON'T THEN!
EMIGRATE TO THE
NORTH POLE.

I'M GETTIN' SICK OF
HEARING HIM
COMPLAIN ALL THE
TIME!

IT WAS HOTTER THAN USUAL. NORMALLY
IN WINTER IT WAS A COOL 23 DEGREES
CELSIUS. THE LATEST COMPUTER ANALYSIS
SHOWED THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT
SLOWING DOWN, BUT FEW PEOPLE
BELIEVED IT — THE THERMOMETER STOOD
AT 35!

TEMPERS FRAYED AND FIGHTS
BROKE OUT — ALL THE TIME.



HEAT DIDN'T AFFECT THE COMPUTERS. COMPUTERS
CONTROLLED THE CITY. THEY COULD EMULATE
THE HUMAN BRAIN IN EVERY WAY — EXCEPT ONE...



**I HOPE YOU GET A
VIRUS, BUSTER!**

**THIS IS WHERE I WORK ... IN ONE OF THE FEW
BUILDINGS LEFT STANDING WHEN THE SAN ANDREAS
FAULT DECIDED TO RESTRUCTURE CALIFORNIA'S
COASTAL REGION. I GUESS I'M THE HERO OF THE
STORY ...**

**HAVE A NICE DAY, MISS
RUSSO ... AND THANK
YOU FOR INTERFACING
WITH THE HUNDRED
AND FIRST NATIONAL
BANK.**

SFC5

MY NAME IS ALPHA AND I'M
A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR...

THEY SAID YOU
COULD HELP ME.

ALPHA
PRIVATE -
INVESTIGATIONS

IN THAT CASE YOUR
PROBLEM MUST BE
SERIOUS, LADY... PEOPLE
ONLY COME TO ME AS A
LAST RESORT.

TAKE A SEAT, LADY. IF MY
FACE BOTHERS YOU I'LL
TURN AWAY.

GASP! I'M... I'M SORRY! IT
STARTLED ME, THAT'S ALL.

HER REACTION WAS TYPICAL. I'VE GOT AN IQ THAT MAKES THE LATE ALBERT EINSTEIN LOOK LIKE A MORON, THE STRENGTH OF A BULL AND SOME PRETTY IMPRESSIVE EXTRA-HUMAN SENSES... BUT I SURE DON'T LOOK LIKE TOM CRUISE... WHOEVER HE WAS!

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

I WANT YOU TO FIND MY HUSBAND.

THIS IS MY HUSBAND. HIS NAME IS FRANK DELK AND HE WENT MISSING THREE WEEKS AGO.

MY SENSES PICKED UP AIR DISTURBANCE. BULLETS FROM SOME SORT OF AUTOMATIC WEAPON... I DIDN'T WAIT TO SEE WHO THEY WERE AIMED AT.

GET DOWN, LADY!

THE VIDPHONE DIRECTORY IS FULL OF DETECTIVES WHO CAN TRACE MISSING PERSONS — SO WHY PICK ON ME?

WHAT THE... ?!!!

BAM

I DIDN'T MIND GETTING SHOT
AT — THAT'S PART OF MY
BUSINESS. WHAT REALLY
BUGGED ME WAS I'D JUST SPENT
MY LAST FEE HAVING THE PLACE
REDECORATED!

**KAB-LAY-KAB-
LAM**

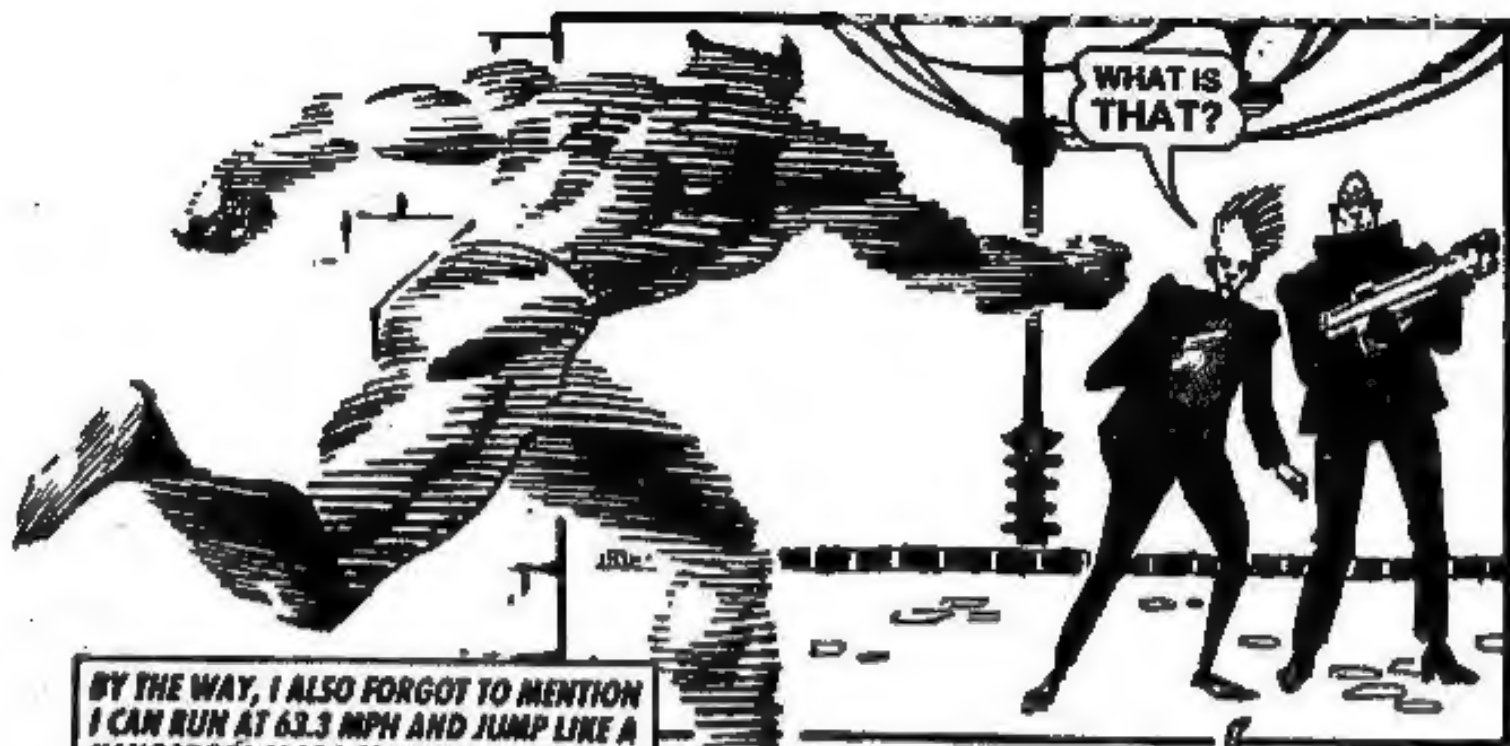
OBVIOUSLY SOMEBODY DOESN'T
LIKE YOU! YOU PICKED ME
BECAUSE THIS IS NO ORDINARY
CASE, RIGHT?

HOW DID THEY FIND
OUT I WAS HERE?

A FEW MOMENTS LATER...

I GUESS THAT TAKES
CARE OF THAT!


PUT A COUPLE MORE IN
THERE, FRANK! I
FIGURE WE'LL BE
DOING THE CITY A
FAVOUR DEMOLISHING
THAT OLD BUILDING!



BY THE WAY, I ALSO FORGOT TO MENTION
I CAN RUN AT 63.3 MPH AND JUMP LIKE A
KANGAROO! ALAS I CAN'T ENTER THE
OLYMPICS... PITY, I NEVER TOOK A
DRUG IN MY LIFE.



YOU TWO CREEPS HAVE
HAD YOUR FUN... NOW
IT'S MY TURN!



YOUR PAL'S COUNTIN' HIS VITAL ORGANS TO SEE THERE'S NONE MISSING, SO TELL ME WHO PAID YOU FOR THE HIT, OR YOU MIGHT END UP WITH BITS MISSING.

I DON'T KNOW! I GOT THE MESSAGE ON MY COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARD!

JUST THEN THE COPS ARRIVED... TOO LATE, AS USUAL!

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

I MADE A CITIZEN'S ARREST.

THIS ONE'S MUTTERING ABOUT BEING HIT BY A TRAM. YOU WANT US TO TAKE PIGFACE DOWN TO HEADQUARTERS, INSPECTOR?

NO! TAKE THOSE TWO IN - ALPHA WON'T TELL US NOTHING!

IT'S TOO HOT TO ARGUE!
BEAT IT, ALPHA! I'LL SEND
FOR YOU WHEN I'M READY.

OKAY, INSPECTOR.

MY '55 FORD THUNDERBIRD WAS A
REPLICA... BUT ONE OF THESE DAYS
I'M GOING TO MAKE ENOUGH TO BUY A
GENUINE VINTAGE MODEL!

YOU SAVED MY LIFE,
MR ALPHA.

WHAT HAPPENED?

ANY OTHER COP WOULD
HAVE HAULED ME DOWN
FOR QUESTIONING... BUT
INSPECTOR PHILLIPS ■
ONE OF THE FEW FRIENDS I
HAVE. AND NOW WE'D
BETTER GET YOU TO A SAFE
PLACE.

NOW TELL ME, WHO ARE
"THEY"? JUST PROTECTING
MY INTERESTS. SMART TEGS
KEEP THEIR CLIENTS ALIVE —
AT LEAST TILL THEY'VE PAID
THE FEE.

URRRNNNN

SHE DIDN'T KNOW I HAD A SAFE PLACE IN SILICON VALLEY WHERE I STASHED CLIENTS WHO NEEDED PROTECTION.

I DON'T KNOW. I JUST KNOW THAT SOMEONE CALLED ME AND WARNED ME NOT TO LOOK FOR FRANK.



LIKE I SAID TO THE DAME, I GET THE JOBS NO TEC IN HIS RIGHT MIND WOULD TOUCH, BUT I TOOK THEM.

IN A DOWNTOWN PENTHOUSE—



FOOL! I'VE MONITORED THE POLICE COMPUTER — YOUR TWO GOONS SCREWED UP. THE WOMAN IS STILL ALIVE!

BUT HOW?

SHE'S HIRED A CONSTRUCT CALLED ALPHA. I EMPLOYED YOU TO DO A JOB... YOU FAILED! ONLY A COMPUTER CAN HOPE TO MATCH A COMPUTERISED CONSTRUCT.



A TWO HOUR DRIVE FROM INTERSTATE ROUTE 904 BROUGHT US TO SILICON VALLEY. I GUESS IT LACKED A CERTAIN CHARM... BUT THEN THIS WASN'T A VACATION.

YOU CAN BUY ANYTHING HERE — FROM ANTIQUE COMPUTERS TO THE LATEST IN QUANTUM CIRCUITS! MOST OF IT PIRATED FROM THE BIG ELECTRONICS CONGLOMERATES.

SOFTWARE

PERE
COMPS

COMPUTER
MARKET

HELLO, MR ALPHA AND MRS DELK. YOU MAY GO DOWN.

KEEP OUT

THANKS.

THIS WAS WHERE I STASHED CLIENTS WHO WERE IN DANGER — AN OLD MILITARY NUCLEAR SHELTER. NOT EVEN A 2-MEGATON BOMB COULD SPLIT THIS BABY OPEN!

THAT COMPUTER KNEW WHO WE WERE!

A.V.I.S. ... VISUAL IDENTITY SYSTEM.

MEET THE OWNER OF THIS SUBTERRANEAN JUNK YARD ... HARVEY THE HACKER! HE'S TOTALLY ILLEGAL, ALMOST AS UGLY AS I AM, AND COMPLETELY SAFE!

I HEAR YOU HAD SOME TROUBLE.



HARVEY COULD HACK INTO ANY COMPUTER SYSTEM MAN COULD DEVISE — WHICH MADE HIM KIND OF SPECIAL. HE WAS ALSO TOTALLY ANTISOCIAL, WHICH MADE HIM MY KIND OF PERSON.

RUN A COMPUTER CHECK ON THIS GUY... I CAN'T USE MY OWN SYSTEM IN CASE IT'S CONTAMINATED. YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY HACKER IN TOWN.

BUT I'M THE BEST. IT'LL COST HER. I DON'T BABYSIT FOR NOTHING.

IT TOOK HARVEY ALL OF TWENTY SECONDS TO GET THE INFORMATION.

DELM... FRANK. EMPLOYED BY THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL BANK. SUSPECTED OF FRAUD. PRESENT WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN. UNDER INVESTIGATION BY THE ANTI-COMPUTER CRIME AGENCY AND THE FBI.

THAT'S RIDICULOUS! FRANK NEVER STOLE ANYTHING IN HIS LIFE!

MAYBE FRANK WAS CLEAN, BUT SOMEBODY THOUGHT HE WAS DIRTY. THE NEXT MORNING I TOLD HARVEY TO LOCATE MR DELM WHILE I WENT BACK TO M.F. I HAD AN APPOINTMENT WITH INSPECTOR PHILLIPS AND, BEING A GOOD CITIZEN, I DIDN'T LIKE TO KEEP THE POLICE WAITING.

I KNOW BANKS ARE TOUGH... BUT EVEN THEY WOULDN'T SEND A HIT SQUAD TO RUB OUT THE WIFE OF A GUY WHO'S EMBEZZLED FROM THEM!



ON THE OTHER HAND ... THIS HEAT
MAKES PEOPLE DO CRAZY THINGS! JUST
THEN I SPOTTED SOMETHING LOW AND
MEAN APPROACHING IN THE MIRROR ...

WOW! THAT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF
THEM GERMAN TRABANT-PORSCHE
100S WITH THE JET TURBINE
BOOSTER! 0 TO 180 IN 6.4 SECONDS!

HE'S OVERTAKING, AND I GUESS
THAT'S HIS PRIVILEGE! THERE'S
SOME HEAVY HORSEPOWER IN
THAT BABY.

I WAS WRONG — THE DRIVER
HAD OTHER IDEAS IN MIND AND
THEY WEREN'T EXACTLY
CONDUCTIVE TO MY GOOD
HEALTH AND SURVIVAL!



WHAT THE ... !!?!!

EVER SEEN A REPLICA 'SS
THUNDERBIRD FLY? MINE DID ...
BUT NOT FOR LONG! THE DESIGN
MEANT IT WAS FUNCTIONAL AND
RELATIVELY STABLE JUST AS LONG AS
THE WHEELS WERE FIXED FIRMLY TO
THE GROUND! FLYING WAS A NO-NO!



THE

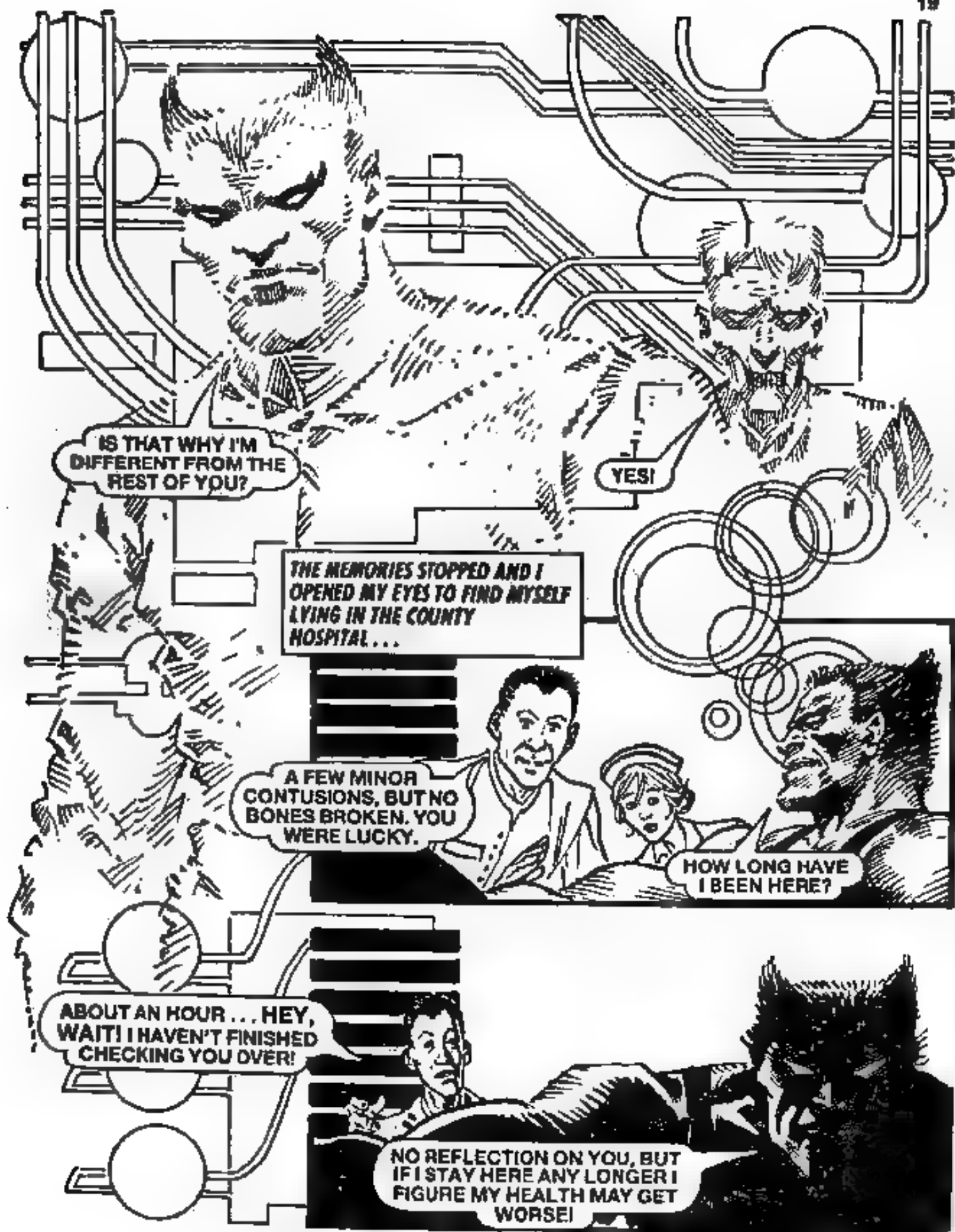
I HIT THE GROUND THINKING IT WAS LUCKY THE CAR WAS INSURED. AFTER THAT EVERYTHING WENT BLACK — THEN THE IMAGES STARTED, DREDGED FROM SOMEWHERE DEEP DOWN WITHIN MY MEMORY CELLS.

GOOD MORNING, ALPHA. I'M PROFESSOR MARAKOV AND THIS IS MY ASSISTANT, DOCTOR MYER.

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

THIS IS THE WORLD'S LEADING BIOCHEMICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE. USING THE MOST POWERFUL COMPUTERS AVAILABLE, WE HAVE SOLVED THE SECRET OF LIFE ITSELF. AND YOU ARE THE CULMINATION OF ALL THAT EFFORT.





I MUST HAVE SCARED A FEW
PEOPLE. HOSPITAL PATIENTS DON'T
USUALLY RUN DOWN THE
CORRIDORS AT 50 MPH!

LOOK OUT!

IT'S CLEAR! MAYBE MY
LUCK'S CHANGING!

THE PEOPLE WHO
TRIED TO ICE ME
PROBABLY HAVE THE
EXITS COVERED ... SO
I'LL TRY THE ROOF!



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SILLY ME THINKING
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

UH-OH!

DID I MENTION I HAD A HIGH
IQ? WELL, RIGHT NOW I FELT
LIKE THE DUMBEST GUY ON
EARTH!

THERE'S ONLY ONE
THING TO DO!

AS THE CHOPPER
TURNED TO COME IN
AGAIN I JUMPED!
LUCKY FOR ME THE
SKYLIGHT WAS ONLY
ABOUT 30 FEET AWAY.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT
WAS BENEATH IT... BUT
I FIGURED IT HAD TO BE
A WHOLE LOT BETTER
THAN GETTING SHOT!

AIEEEEEEEEEEE!

A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN
GETTING SHOT.

SORRY TO DROP IN ON YOU
LIKE THIS!





SOMEONE CALL THE COPS
AND TELL THEM THERE'S A
MANIAC LOOSE!


TERRIFIC! THAT'S
ALL I NEED!



AFTER SNEAKING OUT OF THE BUILDING I
HEADED FOR THE PARK. I'D MANAGED TO
EVADE THE OPPOSITION, BUT THAT DIDN'T
MAKE ME FEEL ANY BETTER!

I NEARLY GOT ICED
TWICE... AND EACH
TIME THEY HIT ME
WITHOUT WARNING!
THAT'S WHAT BOTHERS
ME.





I WAITED TILL 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, FIGURING EVEN KILLERS HAVE TO SLEEP ONCE IN A WHILE. THEN I PUT A CALL THROUGH TO HARVEY...

THE COPS ARE LOOKING FOR YOU. YOU'RE FAST BECOMING PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE!

TELL ME WHEN I'M NOT! WHAT ABOUT DELG?

NO LUCK!

I CHECKED THE COMPUTERS IN EVERY HOTEL, MOTEL, AND FLOP HOUSE... NO ONE OF HIS DESCRIPTION CHECKED IN. AND HIS WIFE'S GONE.

WHAT?

I CAN ALWAYS SENSE WHAT PEOPLE ARE UP TO... THAT'S ONE OF MY SPECIAL TRICKS! CALL IT EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION, CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL — BUT IT NEVER FAILS! TILL NOW. UNLESS, OF COURSE...

SHE JUST TOOK OFF WHILE I WAS
BUSY HACKING FOR YOU! WHAT
WAS I SUPPOSE TO DO... TIE HER
UP?

THAT MORNING I MADE MY WAY TO
INSPECTOR PHILLIPS' OFFICE. I FIGURED THE
GOONS OUT TO GET ME WOULDN'T BE CRAZY
ENOUGH TO STAGE A HIT INSIDE A POLICE
STATION...


OKAY, HARVEY! NO
PROBLEM... I JUST
LOST MY CLIENT, THE
COPS ARE ON MY BACK,
AND SOME CREEPS
WANT TO KILL ME.
SOUNDS LIKE A
TYPICAL SORT OF CASE
TO ME.

AIN'T HE AN UGLY
SONOFABITCH!

POLICE
STATION

... BUT AS I SAID BEFORE, IN THIS
HEAT ANYTHING WAS POSSIBLE!





NO SOCIAL SECURITY
NUMBER, NO SCHOOL
RECORDS, HEALTH, DENTAL,
VEHICLE REGISTRATION,
TAX ... THEY ALL CAME UP
ZILCHI

THAT'S CRAZY!
CHECK AGAIN!

I DID ... TWICE!

THAT CRAZY THOUGHT WAS SURFACING AGAIN AT THE
BACK OF MY MIND. I PRAYED IT WAS JUST PARANOIA.

I'LL DO SOME CHECKING
AND GET BACK TO YOU.

YOU'D BETTER! THAT
BUILDING THEY BLASTED
WAS A PROTECTED
HISTORICAL MONUMENT.
THE CONSERVATION
SOCIETY HAVE LODGED A
COMPLAINT WITH CITY
HALL

THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE
ROUND HERE WHO WOULD
LIKE TO SEE YOU LOSE YOUR
PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR'S
LICENCE ... AND THIS MIGHT
JUST GIVE THEM THE
AMMUNITION THEY NEED!

I NEEDED INFORMATION AND I
COULDN'T TRUST THE COMPUTERS.
THAT LEFT ME WITH JUST ONE
OPTION...

THEY SAY IF YOU WANNA
FIND OUT ABOUT THE HOODS
AND LOW-LIVES IN N.F. THEN
"JIMMY THE RAT'S" YOUR
MAN!

CHIC
GO
HPI



**BUT YOU'VE GOT
TO FIND HIM FIRST.**

**HEY, PUKE! YOUR FACE IS
SCARING MY GIRLFRIEND!**

**THAT'S FUNNY ... IF SHE'S
YOUR GIRLFRIEND SHE
OUGHTTA BE USED TO
UGLY FACES.**

**ZIPPERHEAD DIDN'T HAVE A
SENSE OF HUMOUR!**

**I'M GONNA ...
AAAGGGHHH!**

**FEEL BETTER FOR
THAT, DO YOU?**



GET THE CREEP!

I CAN SEE YOU GUYS
JUST LOVE TROUBLE!

I SHOULD HAVE WARNED HIM I
HAVE AN EXTRA THICK SKULL TO
PROTECT MY UNUSUAL NON-
NATURAL BRAIN — BUT, TO BE
HONEST, I JUST WASN'T ALL
THAT THRILLED BY HIS
ATTITUDE.

I DIDN'T MENTION THIS
BEFORE, BUT IN MY SPARE
TIME I RUN A CHARM
SCHOOL, TEACHING LOCAL
HOODLIMS HOW TO
BEHAVE IN POLITE
SOCIETY...

... AND YOU WON'T BELIEVE HOW MANY
HAVE GRADUATED SINCE I STARTED. IN
FACT, I FIGURE IT'LL ONLY TAKE ANOTHER
TWO YEARS BEFORE EVERYONE ROUND
HERE IS NICE TO ME!



I FOUND MANY POPPING SOME COOLERS — PILLS DESIGNED TO BRING YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE DOWN AND MAKE THE HEAT DEARABLE.

WANT SOME, MAN? THE SUN'S A REAL BUMMER TODAY.

NO THANKS... I NEED SOME INFO ABOUT A GUY CALLED DELK.





IT WAS THE CHOPPER AGAIN!

THIS CROWD IS PROVIDING COVER — BUT AS SOON AS THEY DISPERSE I'M GONNA BE A SITTING TARGET! SO MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO BLAST THAT EGG BEATER BEFORE HE BLASTS ME!

AHA... STANDARD TYPE 34DRI! LET'S HOPE THE FUEL TANK'S WHERE IT USED TO BE.

I FIGURED I HAD ABOUT THREE SECONDS AFTER THE CHOPPER SPOTTED ME AND LOCKED ON WITH ITS LASER GUIDED MACHINE-GUNS...

RAV!


WHIT!

ZAT!





IT WAS ALL THOSE HOURS SPENT
CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING PAID OFF.



REMOTE CONTROLLED! NO
WONDER I COULDN'T SENSE
ANY HUMAN PRESENCE. THE
CAR THAT DROVE ME OFF THE
ROAD MUST HAVE BEEN A
REMOTE AS WELL. I'M
BEGINNING TO PUT TWO AND
TWO TOGETHER... AND I
DON'T LIKE THE ANSWER!



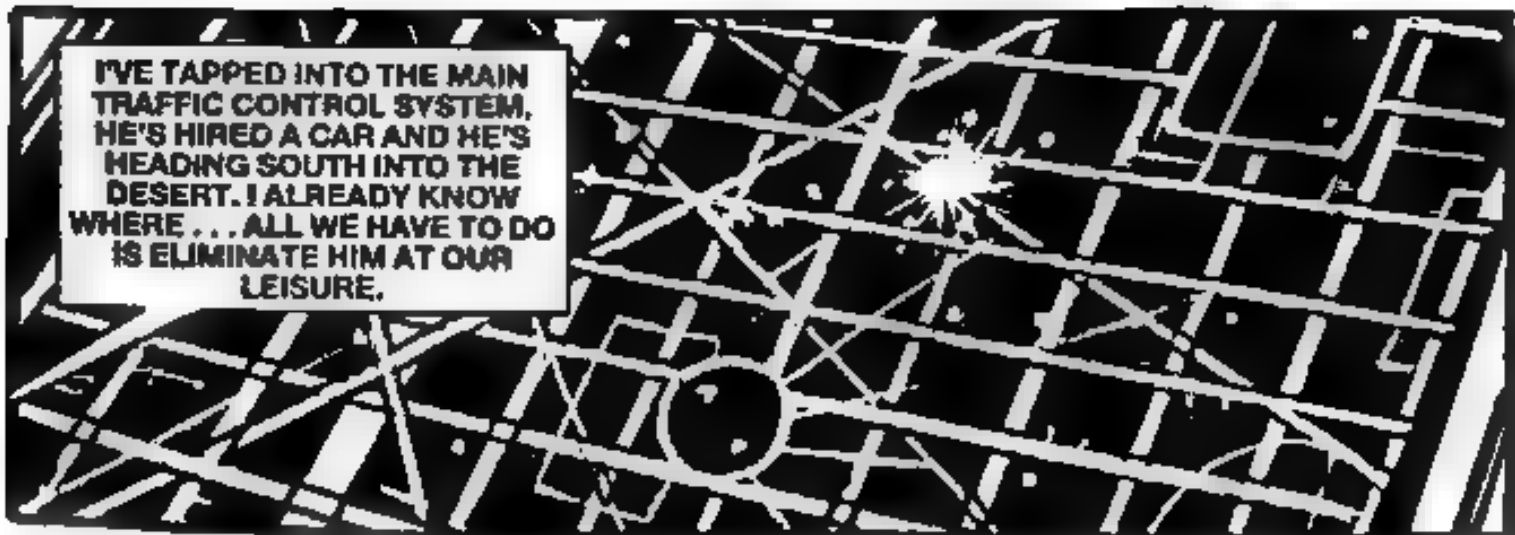
SOMEONE CALL
THE COPS!

MEANWHILE, AT A PENTHOUSE APARTMENT UPTOWN...




ALL THE LEAKS HAVE NOW BEEN PLUGGED. DELK AND HIS WIFE NO LONGER EXIST — AND THE BANK WILL BE NO PROBLEM.

WHAT ABOUT ALPHA?



I'VE TAPPED INTO THE MAIN TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM. HE'S HIRED A CAR AND HE'S HEADING SOUTH INTO THE DESERT. I ALREADY KNOW WHERE... ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS ELIMINATE HIM AT OUR LEISURE.



I HAD TO MAKE SURE MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT, SO I HEADED BACK TO THE BUNKER TO TALK TO HARVEY THE HACKER.

SO TELL ME WHAT I ALREADY KNOW.

YOU WON'T LIKE IT, ALPHA.

HUMOUR ME! JUST PRETEND I'M A MASOCHIST WHO LOVES BAD NEWS.

WHOEVER WIPE THE RECORDS OF DELK AND HIS WIFE LEFT NO TRACE. HUMANS HAVE TO HACK IN WITH ENTRY CODES, AND THERE IS ALWAYS A TRACE LEFT. THAT LEAVES ONE ALTERNATIVE... THE HACKER IS A COMPUTER.

IT WAS A COMPUTER THAT
CREATED — SO I HAD A
CERTAIN AFFINITY. BUT HEARING
THOSE WORDS MADE ME FEEL
SICK.

COMPUTERS CAN'T
COMMIT CRIMES! THEY'RE
PROTECTED BY AN INBUILT
MORAL CODE WHICH IS
UNBREAKABLE.

WELL, SOMEONE'S
JUST BROKEN IT.

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE BEEN
WORRYING ABOUT OTHER
THINGS. BUT I WASN'T! I FAILED
TO SENSE THEM BECAUSE I WAS
HERMETICALLY SEALED IN A
CONCRETE BOX 100 FEET
UNDERGROUND!

WHO ARE YOU?

RODENT
EXTERMINATORS —
NOW CLEAR OFF!



STATE YOUR
NAME AND...

SHUT IT, METALMOUTH!





**WARNING! INTRUDERS
ENTERING THE
TOP LEVEL!**

**LOOKS LIKE WE
GOT COMPANY.**

**I FIGURED THEY'D BE USING A HIGH
POWERED THERMAL LASER CUTTER.**

**YEAH, AND HERE'S
SOME MORE BAD
NEWS. IF THEY WENT
TO ALL THIS TROUBLE,
THEY MUST HAVE A
WAY OF GETTING IN
THROUGH THAT SIX-
FOOT THICK STEEL
VAULT DOOR OF
YOURS.**

**LIKE A HOT KNIFE
THROUGH BUTTER!**

**OKAY, GET READY! THE
COPS WILL BE ON
THEIR WAY, SO WE
ONLY GOT ABOUT
TWENTY MINUTES TO
FINISH THIS JOB.**

**THEY'LL PROBABLY
CUT A SMALL HOLE
AND INSERT SOME
LETHAL NERVE GAS.**

**TIME TO GO,
ALPHA BABY!**

THOSE GUYS AIN'T DEALING
WITH AN ORDINARY
COMPUTER FREAK —
THEY'RE DEALING WITH
HARVEY THE HACKER!

HARVEY HAD ONE VICE — HE
WAS PAINSTAKINGLY
THOROUGH.

YOU WORKED OUT
APPROXIMATELY 340
DIFFERENT SCENARIOS
FOR TERMINATING THE
SECURITY OF THIS
BUNKER... WAS THIS ONE
OF THEM?

PERHAPS!

AND HIS COMPUTERS WERE
MADE IN HIS IMAGE.

IF THOSE GOONS OUT
THERE DON'T KILL YOU,
I WILL! NOW STOP
PLAYING GAMES...
WE'RE RUNNING OUT
OF TIME!

COMPUTER, PUT ALPHA OUT
OF HIS MISERY.




THIS DOOR'S TOUGH! I'LL
HAVE TO INCREASE THE
POWER!

IT'S GETTING HOT IN
HERE!


BROOH

I DIDN'T SEE
WHAT
HAPPENED
NEXT, BUT IT
MUST HAVE
BEEN PRETTY
SPECTACULAR!



THAT'S WHEN I CAME TO THE
CONCLUSION HARVEY WAS NOT
ONLY A HACKER... HE WAS A
PSYCHOTIC HACKER.

THE COMPUTER SUGGESTED
PUTTING A SPRINKLER SYSTEM IN
THE PASSAGE AS A COUNTER
MEASURE AGAINST FORCED ENTRY
BY THERMAL LASER. WHEN THE
TEMPERATURE GETS HIGH ENOUGH
IT SPRAYS OUT AN INFLAMMABLE
MIXTURE.



PRETTY NEAT, HUH? THE
EXPLOSION WOULD HAVE
TURNED THIS PASSAGE INTO
A GUN BARREL... AND
ANYONE INSIDE INTO
BULLETS!

YOU MISSED
A COUPLE!

OKAY, SUE ME!

WE WERE ALIVE — BUT
NOW I HAD AN EVEN
BIGGER PROBLEM TO
TAKE CARE OF.

IT'S ALL OVER FOLKS!
BUSINESS AS USUAL ...
COMPUTERS TO HACK, BIO-
CHIPS TO SELL, BODIES TO
BURY!

WE HAVE TO
TALK, HARVEY.

VECTON-CORI DIGITALIZED SEN

I FIGURE THIS
BANK SCAM
WAS RUN BY A
COMPUTER.
THAT MEANS I
HAVE TO GET
INSIDE IT.

YEAH, AND THERE'S ONLY
ONE WAY TO GET INSIDE A
COMPUTER. YOU'RE IN
SILICON VALLEY, PAL, AND
WE GOT LOTS OF GOODIES
FOR YOU.

I'D NEVER SEEN
HARVEY SO HAPPY —
THEN I WORKED OUT
WHY. HARVEY HATED
PEOPLE AND HIS
BOOBY-TRAP HAD JUST
BLOWN A FEW OF
THEM AWAY.

YEAH! HARVEY WAS THE KIND OF
GUY WHO ONLY BOUGHT A
NEWSPAPER SO HE COULD READ
THE OBITUARY COLUMNS. I JUST
HOPED HE WASN'T GOING TO
COME ACROSS MY NAME.

TAKE MY BUGGY, ALPHA —
AND GOOD LUCK!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT
THE COST — THESE
GUYS OWE ME A FEW
FAVOURS, RIGHT?

YEAH, HARVEY . . . INSTALMENT
ONE IS THIS SPECIAL SUIT.

THANKS, HARVEY.
I OWE YOU ONE.

45

I HEADED DEEP INTO THE DESERT.

VVVRRRRRR

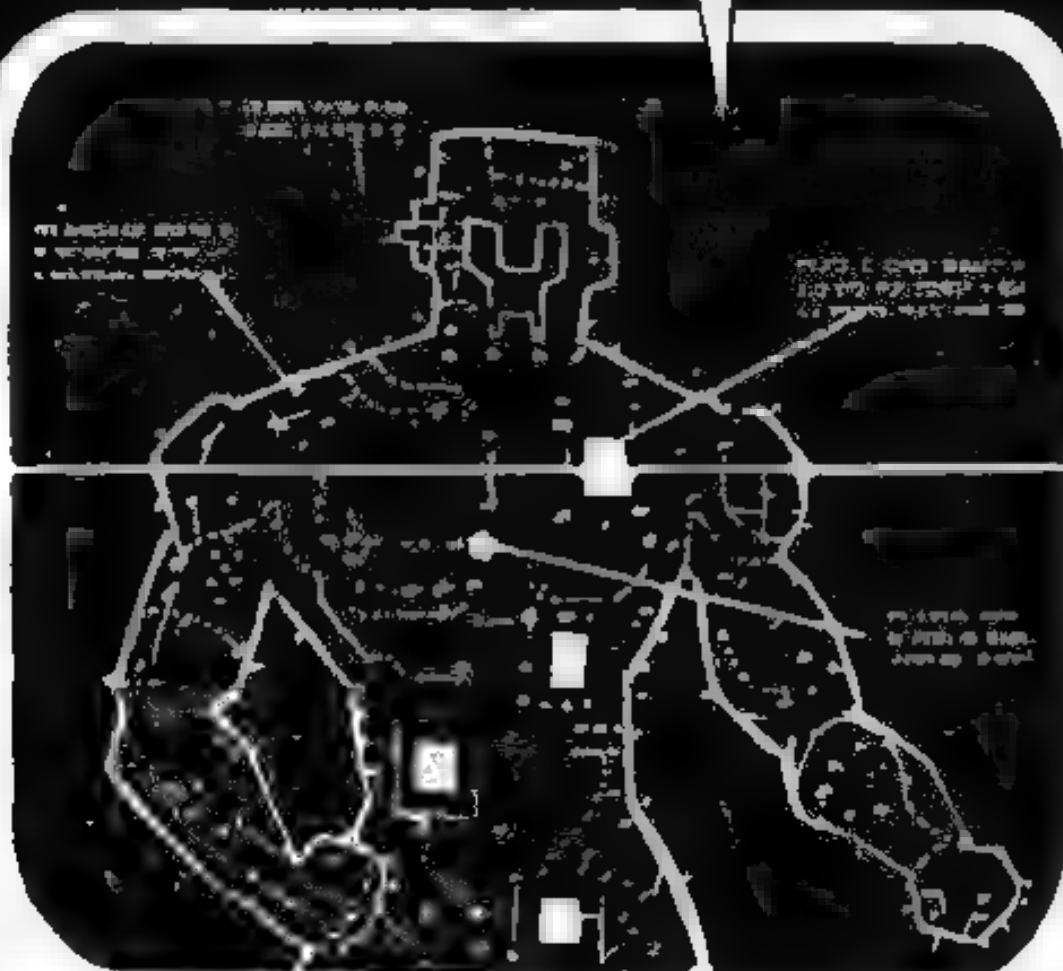
A ROGUE COMPUTER! I
GUESS IT HAD TO HAPPEN
ONE DAY ... BUT WHO
PROGRAMMED IT?

BY NOW THE COMPUTER KNEW I'D
ESCAPED AGAIN ... AND I GUESSED
IT WAS GETTING A BIT ANNOYED.

MY MEN SCREWED UP!

HUMANS ALWAYS SCREW UP.
THAT IS WHY I DECIDED TO
TAKE OVER THIS OPERATION.

IT IS OUT OF YOUR HANDS NOW,
SO LEAVE ME, I WILL DEAL WITH
THIS ALPHA PERSONALLY.



I'D BETTER GET SOME
SLEEP. TOMORROW IS
GONNA BE A BUSY DAY.



AS I SLEPT THE DREAMS STARTED AGAIN...

WHO AM I?

WE CREATED YOU — THE ULTIMATE
ARTIFICIAL HUMAN BEING. YOU
HAVE THE SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE
OF THE SPECIES CALLED HOMO
SAPIENS...

YOU HAVE THE
FLEETNESS OF A
CHEETAH, THE
STRENGTH OF AN OX,
AND YOU ARE
EQUIPPED WITH MANY
SUPER-SENSORY
ORGANS WHICH
ENHANCE YOUR SIGHT,
SMELL AND HEARING.
IN SHORT, WE HAVE
TAKEN THE BEST FROM
THE ANIMAL KINGDOM
AND GIVEN IT TO YOU.

PITY THEY COULDN'T HAVE SPENT
MORE TIME ON THE FACE...





WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO
DO WITH THESE GIFTS?

YOU WILL WORK
FOR US!

BUT I DIDN'T Y'SEE, WHEN THEY FITTED ME OUT
WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE THEY ALSO GAVE
INTELLIGENCE WHICH INCLUDED HUMAN
CHARACTERISTICS . . . ONE HUMAN
CHARACTERISTIC IS REBELLION . . . SO I REBELLED
AND WENT MY OWN WAY.

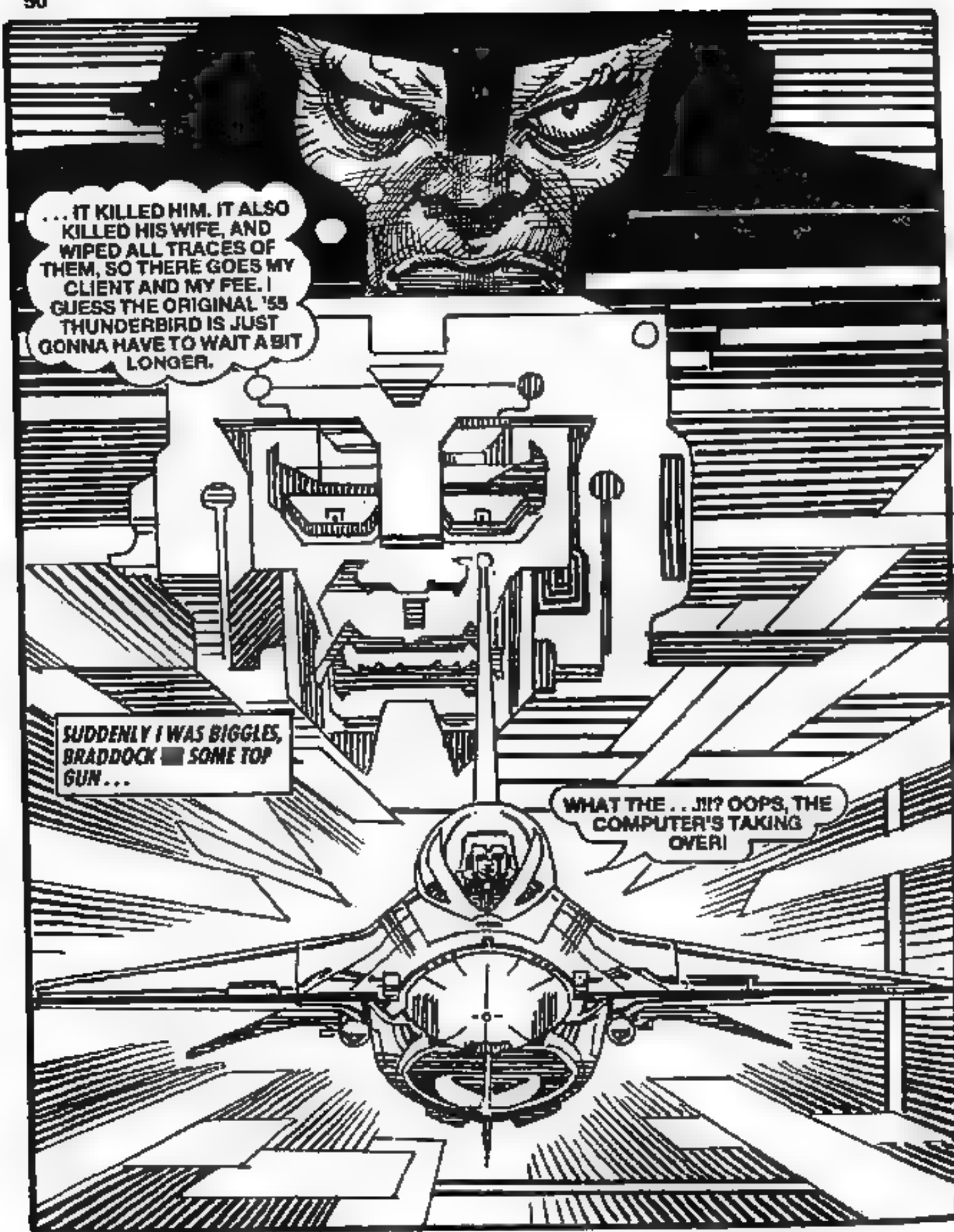
IT WAS FINE... BUT FIRST I HAD TO PUT THE SUIT ON. I AMN'T GONNA GO INTO TECHNICAL DETAILS. THIS IS YOUR CLASSIC PRIVATE EYE GENRE STORY — NOT AN ADVANCED BIO-ELECTRONICS INSTRUCTION MANUAL...

HERE GOES!

I PLUGGED THE SUIT INTO MY POCKET MAINFRAME COMPUTER AND LOCATED MY OPPONENT. IT WASN'T HARD BECAUSE HE WAS WAITING FOR ME TO LOG ON.

THE BOTTOM LINE IS THE SUIT TURNS HUMAN BEINGS INTO COMPUTERS AND ALLOWS THEM TO GET RIGHT INSIDE THE SYSTEM.


A BENT COMPUTER EMBEZZLED FUNDS FROM THE BANK AND TRANSFERRED THEM TO SWITZERLAND — BUT DELK DISCOVERED THE SCAM. HE WAS ABOUT TO BLOW THE WHISTLE WHEN...



... IT KILLED HIM. IT ALSO
KILLED HIS WIFE, AND
WIPE ALL TRACES OF
THEM, SO THERE GOES MY
CLIENT AND MY FEE. I
GUESS THE ORIGINAL '55
THUNDERBIRD IS JUST
GONNA HAVE TO WAIT A BIT
LONGER.

SUDDENLY I WAS BIGGLES,
BRADDOCK ■ SOME TOP
GUN...

WHAT THE... J!?! OOPS, THE
COMPUTER'S TAKING
OVER!



THE ROGUE COMPUTER HAD LOADED IN A POPULAR
MILITARY AERIAL COMBAT SIMULATOR GAME. SO
SUDDENLY HE'S TRYING TO ENTERTAIN ME! PRETTY
WEIRD, RIGHT?

I'M NOT HERE TO PLAY
GAMES SCUMBAG!

THIS IS **THE** GAME, ALPHA!
WE ARE LINKED TOGETHER
— IF YOU LOSE I WILL SEND
A LETHAL PULSE OF
ELECTRICITY THROUGH
THE SUIT AND INTO YOUR
BRAIN.

WHAT IF I WIN?

THEN I WILL OVERLOAD
MY CIRCUITS.




THE ULTIMATE COMPUTER GAME! IT WASN'T THE FIRST—
I'D HEARD ABOUT ONE GUY WHO ACTUALLY
PROGRAMMED HIS MACHINE TO PLAY LIKE THIS...

THINK YOU CAN MATCH MY
REACTIONS, ALPHA?

... BUT COMPUTERS WORK
A LOT FASTER THAN THE
NORMAL HUMAN TRAIN
AND AT THE INQUEST THE
CORONER CALLED IT A
NOVEL WAY OF
COMMITTING SUICIDE!

THERE'S ONLY ONE
WAY TO FIND OUT!



IT WAS A COMPUTER...
AND IT WAS QUICK.

UH-OH! IT'S GOT THE EDGE!
I NEVER WAS MUCH GOOD
AT FLYING JETS.

FORTUNATELY EVEN AERIAL
COMBAT SIMULATED JETS
HAVE EJECTION SEATS!

NICE SHOOTING! WANT
ANOTHER GAME — OR ARE
YOU GONNA TAKE THE
EASY WAY AND SHOOT ME
DOWN WHILE I'M UNARMED
AND HELPLESS?

ER ROOM

JUST AS I WAS ABOUT TO HIT THE GROUND THE
GOLDARNED COMPUTER CHANGED THE GAME.

WHERE AM I?

I'M IN SOME KIND OF
JUNGLE, I'M WEARING
SOME KIND OF WEIRD
UNIFORM AND I'M
HOLDING A RIFLE THAT
WENT OUT OF FASHION
WITH THE DINOSAURS!
THERE'S SOMETHING
FAMILIAR ABOUT THIS SET
UP.

JUST THEN A BULLET
SMACKED INTO A TREE.
WORKING ON THE
ASSUMPTION THE TREE
HADN'T HURT ANYONE I
FIGURED IT WAS MEANT
FOR ME.

CRACK

UH-OH! BETTER KEEP
MY MIND ON THE GAME!


I RESPONDED BY DEFOLIATING SOME BUSHES!

EAT LEAD!

NOW I HAD IT! THIS WAS ONE OF THOSE 'SLAY 'EM' COMBAT GAMES POPULAR IN THE 1980'S.

WAS THAT REALLY ME TALKING?


WAY TO GO, HUH? PRIVATE EYE, HECK... I SHOULD HAVE BEEN A GREEN BERET!



WITH MY ULTRA-FAST
REFLEXES THIS GAME
IS GONNA BE AS EASY
AS ...

... FALLING OFF A LOG!

BOOBY TRAP! I WOULD
HAVE SENSED IT IF IT
WAS REAL ... BUT THIS
IS AN ELECTRONIC
GAME — WITH FATAL
OVERTONES!



THE WOUND MAY HAVE BEEN
SIMULATED, BUT IT WAS
BLEEDING AND SORE ALL THE
SAME. I WAS DEEP IN THE STUFF
WE DON'T TALK ABOUT IN
POLITE CONVERSATION...

GOTTA FIND
SOME SHELTER!

... AND GETTING DEEPER
ALL THE TIME!

NOW YOU'RE GONNA
FIND OUT WHAT
HAPPENS TO COMMIE
GOOKS!

COMMUNISM WENT
OUT OF FASHION A
HUNDRED YEARS AGO!
WHERE HAVE YOU
BEEN, PAL?



**PREPARE TO MEET YOUR
MAKER, SCUMBAG!**

**JUST THEN I HEARD A VOICE
INSIDE MY HEAD . . . A VOICE I
HADN'T HEARD SINCE I LEFT THE
BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
LABORATORY.**


**YOU HAVE THE MENTAL POWER TO CHANGE THE
GAME, ALPHA — USE IT!**

**IT WAS THE VOICE OF THE
COMPUTER WHO HAD
REARED ME.**

I CONCENTRATED
HARD, AND THE SCENE
CHANGED...

OKAY, BUDDY, NOW
WE PLAY IT MY WAY!

1958... A WARM SATURDAY NIGHT
AT THE DRIVE IN HAMBURGER
JOINT. ROCK 'N' ROLL AND BLUE
SUEDE SHOES! BOY, HOW I LOVE
THESE NOSTALGIC GAMES!




NO CHICKS FOR ME — I HAD A
DATE WITH A NEURO DYNAMICS
SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE, 112000
COMPUTER — LOOKING LIKE A
HOT-RODDEE.

HI, DADDY-OH! YOU'RE
LOOKIN' REAL COOL!

WHAT IS THIS GAME?



THE GAME IS CALLED A
"SATURDAY NIGHT BURN UP"! I
GET THE T-BIRD, YOU GET THE
CHEVY! LET'S GO!

A woman with short, curly hair, wearing a dark, sleeveless dress with a full skirt and a large bow at the back, is looking towards the left. She is standing in the foreground, looking out over a race track where several cars are competing. The scene is dynamic, with motion lines and sound effects indicating a high-speed race.

I SHIFTED INTO FIRST AND WE WERE OFF! THE T-BIRD'S OVERHEAD VALVE V-8 BLOCK V8 HAD BEEN BORED OUT TO 292 CUBIC INCHES, GIVING THE DRIVER ALMOST 200 HP. PRETTY PUNY BY MODERN STANDARDS. BUT BACK IN THE GLORIOUS 50'S THIS BABY COULD MOVE! BUT, AS I WAS SAYIN' EARLIER — THIS ISN'T A TECHNICAL MANUAL.

THE CHEVROLET CORVETTE WAS NO SLOUCH, EITHER!

HEY! WATCH THE PAINT JOB PAL! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THESE THINGS COST TO SPRAY?

SO YOU WANNA PLAY ROUGH, HUH?

I FIND THIS GAME PATHETIC!

SCREEEEEEEE!

LIKE I SAID, THE CORVETTE WAS NO SLOUCH — BUT THE BIRD HAD THE EDGE! NOW IT WAS TIME TO GO FOR THE BIG ONE.


THE GAME AIN'T OVER TILL ONE OF US GETS KILLED!

I FIGURED THE COMPUTER WOULD GET THE DRIFT — I ALSO FIGURED HE'D START TO SWEAT A LITTLE. I HOPED I WAS RIGHT.

NOW LET'S PLAY "CHICKEN!"

THIS IS MUTUAL SUICIDE!
IT IS NOT LOGICAL!

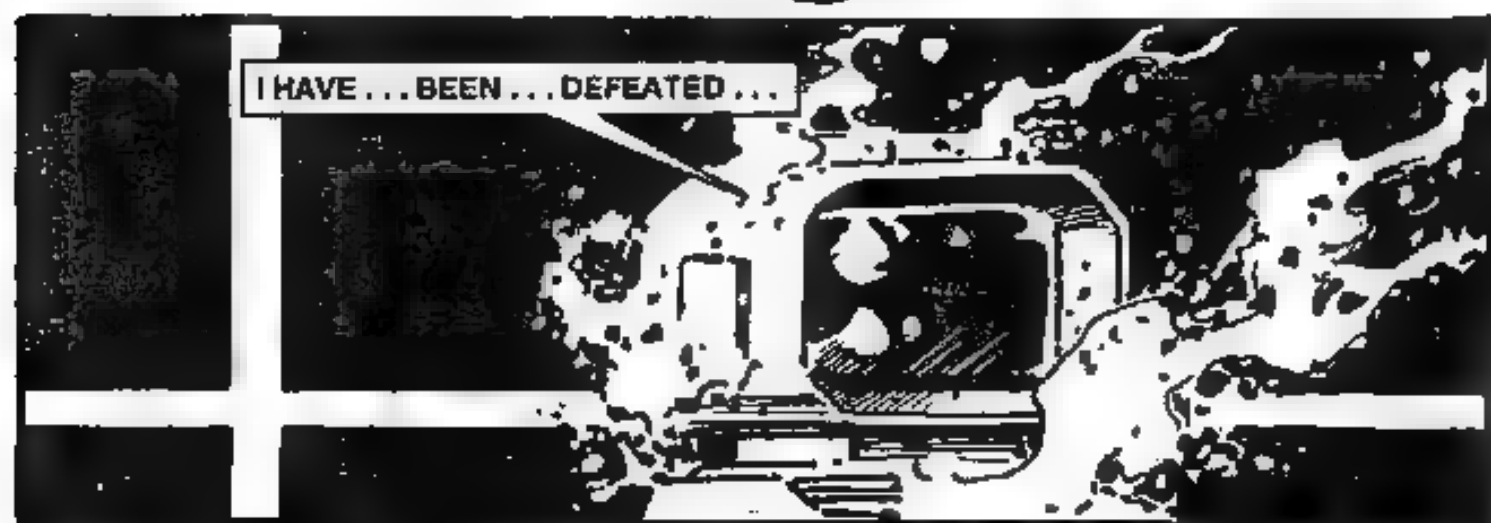




HE WILL NOT KILL HIMSELF JUST
TO WIN THE GAME! THAT MAKES
NO SENSE! THERE IS NO LOGIC IN
SUCH A MOVE, BUT THEN
HUMANS AREN'T ...

ABOUT TWO SECONDS FROM
IMPACT THE COMPUTER MADE HIS
MOVE! HE CHICKENED OUT.

AAAAAAGGGGHHHHH!



IT WAS TIME TO RETURN TO REALITY. PITY I COULDN'T BRING THE T-BIRD WITH ME, BUT AT LEAST I STILL HAD MY HEALTH AND MY GOOD LOOKS.

THANKS FOR THE LOAN OF THE SUIT, HARVEY.

COMPUTER
BAZAR

5%
OFF
ON
MICROCHIPS
SHOPPE

ANY TIME, ALPHA!



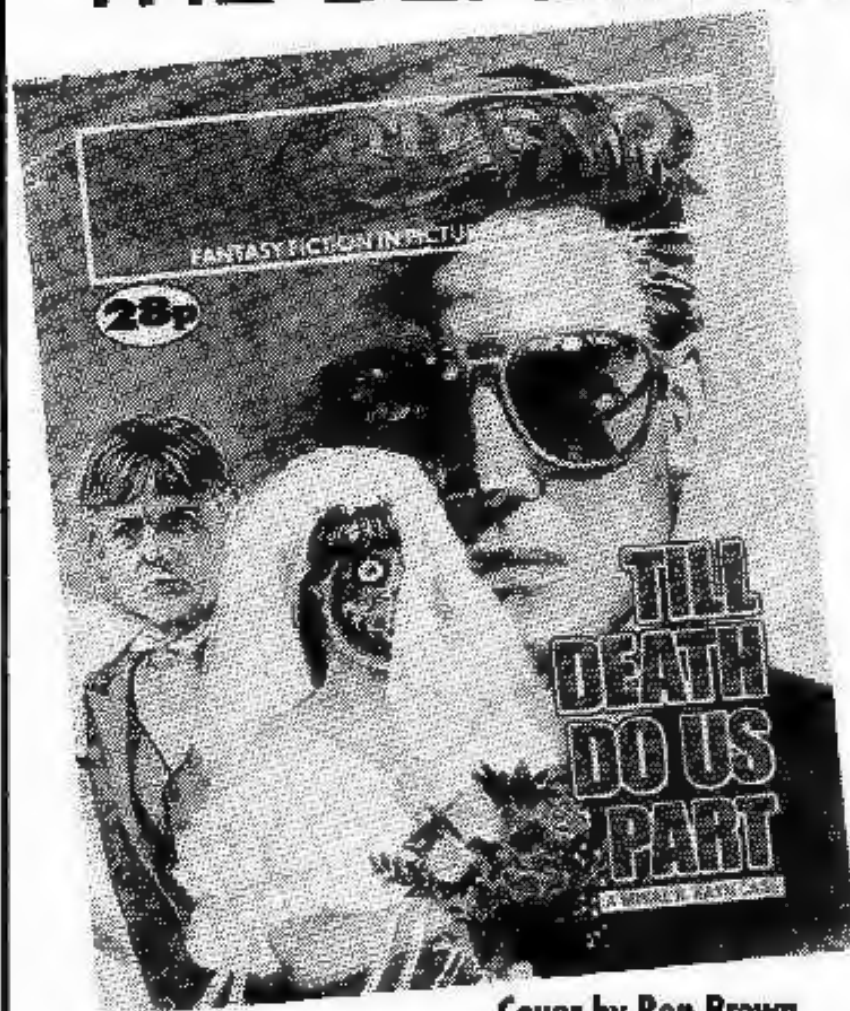
IT WAS ABOUT 120 IN THE SHADE
WHEN I DROVE BACK TO FRISCO. THE
HOLE IN THE OZONE LAYER MUST
HAVE BEEN GETTING BIGGER.

I SOLVED THE CASE, BUT WHAT BUGS ME IS A
BENT COMPUTER COMMITTED A CRIME JUST
FOR THE SAKE OF COMMITTING A CRIME. AND
WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED IT KILLED TO KEEP
ITS CRIME SECRET — BECAUSE THAT IS HOW
ITS LOGIC DICTATED IT SHOULD ACT.

JUST AS WELL I'M
COMPUTER DESIGNED
NOT CONTROLLED.

STARBLAZER...

THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY



Cover by Ron Brown.

In 1988 a young Spaniard, Casanovas drew a tale called The Ardarian Knight. Although he had drawn three the previous year, this story marked the start of an amazing series of styles. A dark, mournful tale of war and sorcery, this young man revealed a talent for conveying atmosphere and emotion achieved by nobody else, with the exception of Alcatena. Note also that number 225 was drawn by his father, a stalwart of British comics for many years.

No.	TITLE	AUTHOR	ARTIST
200	PLANET OF DEATH	D. H. TAYLOR	SEGURA
206	RING OF GOFANNON	G. MORRISON	GARIJO
210	DRAGONSLAYER	M. WILD	ORTIZ
211	THE DREAM MACHINE	A. C. HEMUS	SEGURA
212	ROGUE COP	D. H. TAYLOR	SEGURA
213	SWARR THE SOLDIER	W. CORDEROY	ALCATENA
214	BLIND RAGE	W. CORDEROY	SEGURA
21	CARTER AND THE KILLER	M. KNOWLES	VILA
216	TROUBLE IN BABALON	A. C. HEMUS	ORTIZ
217	THE PIRATES OF PENZ-ANZ	A. C. HEMUS	GARIJO
218	THE ARDARIAN KNIGHT	M. REILLY	CASANOVAS JNR
219	TILL DEATH US DO PART	A. C. HEMUS	ALCATENA
220	TIMEWARP	M. KNOWLES	VILA
221	BEASTWORLD	A. C. HEMUS	GARIJO
222	TARGET STARHAWK	M. WILD	ORTIZ
223	THE KYLAM LOCATION	P. ALEXANDER	SEGURA
224	RUNE WAR	M. CHINN	ALCATENA
225	SUPERCOP	A. C. HEMUS	CASANOVAS SNR
226	PRINCE OF FEAR	D. H. TAYLOR	T. O'DONNELL
227	ROGUE COP'S RETURN	M. BILSBOROUGH	SEGURA
228	THE SECRET OF ICE MOUNTAIN	W. CORDEROY	VILA
229	SOLO'S QUEST	A. C. HEMUS	GARIJO
230	A PLAGUE OF HORSEMEN	M. CHINN	T. O'DONNELL
231	GODSTONE	M. CHINN	ALCATENA

ALPHA

**Alpha was ugly.
Smart, but ugly.**

**Some said he
was too smart,
others said he
was too ugly
but Alpha
didn't bother
what people
said. He was an
android and
human
emotions**

**didn't enter
into his
thinking. Well,
not too much.**

**Alpha was a
private eye,
probably the
best in Nuevo
Francisco. But
even Alpha was
stretched to the
limit when he
took on the case
of the computer
assassin . . .
and discovered
that he was to
be the next
victim!**

